

Good Evening, Senator Osten, Representative Walker ,Senator Miner, Representative France and Members of the appropriations committee

My name is Andrew Way and I work for Reliance Health Inc. in Norwich.
I am writing to you regarding HB5037 AAC (DHS)

I am a Recovery Coordinator for the organization. In this position I facilitate meetings daily. These meetings are open to those with mental health and addiction issues. These meetings are critical to the individual's wellbeing. Especially now with the isolation issues brought about by the Covid epidemic.

I must state a personal reason for being at Reliance Health. My mother had suffered from mental health issues beginning in the 1960's. As a young boy growing up in the 1970's I can vaguely recall her hospitalizations. I did feel the impact of days she spent crying on the couch. She had no outlet. No program that would make her feel included or part of. Then after a brief hospitalization she was directed to something new. Reliance House in downtown Norwich. This was great since we lived in Norwich. My mother would go to morning meetings and stay for lunches. I believe these were her best days! She would come home and feel part of the family.

I can remember her laughing and it was infectious! I cherish those days from my childhood.

Everyone deserves the opportunity to be part of something. Something that gives them a sense of inclusion. To be with people who can understand and relate to what you're going through. I can attest to this firsthand. I have been a member of Alcoholics Anonymous since July 9th, 2012.

I understand the need to be with like-minded people. This is critical to my recovery.

I know you are inundated with numbers and budgetary requests. I am writing to you as a person who has benefited from the Reliance organization as a child and now as an employee. I am compelled to give back to the community and the organization. I hope you are compelled to appropriate funds to an organization that is grossly underfunded. An organization that does so much for the community in these most trying times.

Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Andrew Way